

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 540

By Miller L

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Elizabeth "Lizzie" Bolden as the oldest living American and second oldest living person in the world.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize those venerable citizens of our State and nation whose extraordinary longevity provide living links to eras of our history long past; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Elizabeth "Lizzie" Bolden of Memphis is one such venerable Tennessean, who, at age 114, is the oldest living American and the second oldest living person in the world; and

WHEREAS, born August 15, 1890, in rural Fayette County to parents who were former slaves, "Mama Lizzie," as she is known to her family, now lives quietly in a Memphis nursing home; she has been recognized by the local, state and national governments as she passed her centenarian status; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles-based Gerontology Research Group, which runs regular Internet searches for advanced age birthdays spotted Mrs. Bolden's 112th birthday in a 2003 *Commercial Appeal* story and verified her age against the 1910 and 1900 census records; and

WHEREAS, the verification displaced Mrs. Betty Rutherford Wilson of New Albany, Mississippi, about 70 miles southeast of Memphis, as the oldest living American in the *Guinness Book of Records*; Mrs. Wilson, a modest Christian lady, did not mind having been found the second oldest living American; and

WHEREAS, according to her grandson, James W. Bolden, Mrs. Lizzie Bolden has received letters from every President since President Reagan recognizing her longevity; she

has more than 30 grandchildren and former police director James H. Bolden is her step grandchild; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee is indeed fortunate to have as a citizen one who has reached such advanced years and whose life encompasses a large portion of Tennessee's history, and Mrs. Lizzie Bolden should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we pause in our deliberations to salute Mrs. Elizabeth "Lizzie" Bolden upon being recognized as the oldest living American and the second oldest living person in the world, thank her for serving as a link to our State's history, and offer her our best wishes for much happiness in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.